

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Biased programming disguised as "news" does not serve the public interest of educating the populace to provide for a strong democracy. The right of a free press implies the responsibility of using that freedom for the greater good, not to promote the private interest of the purveyor. Sinclair's actions show why we need to guarantee that a wide range of views be provided for by a widely diverse ownership of media and rules requiring that diverse opinions be represented in a reasonable way. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.